THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) to (f) Reports indicate that Pak ISI has been using Nepal as a base for anti-India activities. Inputs also reveal that Nepal has become an important transit route for smuggling of narcotics, etc. Home Secretaries, and not Foreign Secretaries, of the two countries met from 8th to 11th March, 1995 in Kathmandu, where Nepal had given an assurance that its territory would not be permitted to be used against India. Regular bilateral contact through an on going high level dialogue is maintained with his Majesty's Government of Nepal to ensure closer cooperation between the security agencies of the two countries to combat trans-border crime and terrorism. Steps have also been taken to increase vigilance on the Indo-Nepal border to check the activities of undesirable elements and Government have also instructed all Central and State agencies to step up enforcement efforts in a coordinated manner.

Freeing the Police from Excessive Political Control

228. SHRI O.P. KOHLI: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Supreme Court has directed to go into the recommendations contained in Police Commission's report and suggestions of National Human Rights Commission to free the police force from its excessive political control and to constitute the force on the lines of CBI i.e., to free it from the executive control in the matter of investigation; and

(b) if so, the details of action taken by Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Directions of the Supreme Court in W.P. (Criminal) No. 340-343 of 1993 had been brought to the notice of the State Governments for necessary action. However, Pursuant to the directions of the Supreme Court dated the 20th July, 1998 in another case (WP Civil No. 310 of 1998), the Committee constituted by the Government submitted its first Report which has been filed in the Supreme Court as directed by it and this case is listed for further hearing on 22nd March, 1999.

Ban on Lotteries

226. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal to ban lotteries in the country;

(b) whether any steps were taken in that regard in 1998-99;

(c) by which year lotteries would be banned in every State and at the Centre; and

(d) the steps taken in that direction?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) to (d) A proposal to enact a comprehensive legislation to ban lotteries in the country is under active consideration at present.

Pending pension cases of freedom fighters from Bhagalpur

230. SHRI SURYANBHAN PATIL VAHADANE: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of applicants approved by Central Government for freedom fighters' pension as well as those pending since 1994 upto 31.12.1998 concerning Bhagalpur District of Bihar;

(b) the names of all the applicants including widows whose cases have been rejected since 1994 till date and the reasons therefor;

(c) the reasons for rejecting the applications of Smt. Urvashi Devi wife of Late Shri Kinkar Singh of P.S. Dhoraiya,